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Through: S - The Secretary.
S/S.

March 8, 1949

NEA - Mr. Satterthwaite.

Declaration on Greece, Turkey and Iran.

PROBLEM:

To concert with the British and the other governments concerned the form and scope of a declaration stating our interest in and support for the security of Greece, Turkey, and Iran, to be issued simultaneously with the conclusion of the North Atlantic Pact. To determine what powers should sign such a declaration.

BACKGROUND:

It has long been recognized by both the British and ourselves that the conclusion of the North Atlantic Pact might have undesirable repercussions on certain nations which would not be included in its scope. Their omission might be taken, by the nation in question as well as the USSR, as an indication that aggression against these nations would not produce any serious reaction on the part of the major western powers. It has been agreed in principle that this danger should be avoided by the issuance of a special declaration. The British have indicated that they consider this virtually as important as the conclusion of the North Atlantic Pact itself.

The Greek and Turkish Governments have stated their interest in the issuance of a declaration of the sort proposed, and the Shah of Iran has likewise expressed a desire for some action of this type. The Turkish Government has asked to be consulted on the form and content of the statement before its issuance, and the British and ourselves have agreed to such consultation.

We and the British are in full agreement that the declaration should cover Greece and Turkey. Previously, the British have been reluctant to include Iran, but we were informed on March 8 that in the light of the considerations advanced in a conversation on February 18, (set forth in Tab A), Mr. Bevin personally is now willing to accept the inclusion of Iran.

It was originally hoped that all seven members of the Pact would join in signing the proposed declaration, but preliminary talks have indicated that the smaller states would be unwilling to adhere to any statement covering Iran and might refuse even to sign anything covering the other three states unless it were watered down to a degree unacceptable to us. Furthermore, on February 17 the Turkish and Greek Ambassadors advised us that their Governments would prefer to have the proposed declaration made only by the major powers, the United States, United Kingdom, and, possibly, France.

TOP SECRET

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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On March 8 the British Embassy representatives read to us a telegram from London saying that Mr. Bevin was anxious to have by Thursday, March 10, a definite statement of U.S. agreement to the issuance of a declaration of the kind proposed, so that he could present the proposal on that date to a special Cabinet meeting being held to discuss the Atlantic Pact. The London telegram further said that Mr. Bevin believed it necessary to announce by March 15, on the occasion of the publication of the text of the Atlantic Pact, that a declaration regarding U.K. and U.S. concern with the security of Greece, Turkey, and Iran would be issued shortly. If this were not done, he felt, those three countries would appear to be left out in the cold during the two-week period which would elapse between publication of the text of the Pact and its signature and the concurrent issuance of the proposed special declaration.

I informed the representatives of the British Embassy that the working level of the Department had not completed its study of all aspects of this question and I doubted very much whether we could give Mr. Bevin a specific answer by Thursday. I also doubted whether we could agree to announce that a declaration would be made until agreement had been reached within the American Government as to the terms of the declaration itself. However, I said, it had been proposed that you should insert in thespeech you are to give next week following publication of the Atlantic Pact a reference to American interest in peace and security in all parts of the world and a specific mention of our policy of support for Greece, Turkey, and Iran as an example of this interest. You should add that we intended to continue that policy. It was believed by most of the officers concerned in the Department that such a statement in your speech would be sufficient to take care of the situation pending the final conclusion of the Atlantic Pact and the issuance of a declaration on Greece, Turkey, and Iran.

I suggested that the Embassy communicate our tentative thinking on this point to London and see whether Mr. Bevin would not feel that the action proposed would be sufficient for the time being. He could of course make a similar statement, perhaps in answer to a question in the House of Commons. The Embassy representatives said they would do this but expressed some doubt as to whether Bevin would feel able to make any statement unless he knew definitely that it was to be followed in due course by a more formal declaration. They added that the British Ambassador would probably feel obliged to seek a personal interview with you, since he was instructed to do so by the latest London telegram, and had in fact, received several previous instructions to the same effect which he had not carried out. They said it was apparent that Mr. Bevin was becoming nervous at the delay in reaching an agreed U.S.-U.K. position on this whole matter.

DISCUSSION:

In view of the negative attitude of the smaller western European nations and the views expressed by Greece and Turkey, it seems desirable to abandon the

idea

idea of having the declaration signed by all the prospective members of the Atlantic Pact. This will simplify the task of negotiation, and it is believed that a statement by Great Britain and the United States, with or without the adherence of France, will carry virtually as much moral force as one signed also by the Benelux nations. Furthermore, since the declaration is expected to call for consultation among the signatories in the event of an attack upon any of the countries to which it applies, it may even be a positive advantage to omit from the list of signatories the weaker states which might be more reluctant to act and which could contribute little to any action which might be taken.

We remain very strongly of the opinion that Iran must be covered. We believe that to omit that country would be worse than to have no declaration at all.

Inasmuch as we have agreed to consult the Turkish Government, and since logic and custom require it in any case, we must be prepared at an early date to submit a draft to the Governments of all three (or four, if Italy is to be covered) of the countries to which the declaration is to apply. First, however, we must have the concurrence or approval of all the proper authorities of our own Government and must have reached agreement with the British as to the text of the declaration.

Although the proposed declaration or statement will not require Senate approval, its obvious relation to the Pact would seem to indicate the desirability of explaining it to Senate leaders at an early date. If this is not done, the Department may lay itself open to charges of concealment in a matter which might affect the attitude of the Congress toward the Pact.

In view of the several steps involved and the inevitable delays to be anticipated in concerting a measure of this kind with four or five other governments, it is essential that our own action be as speedy as possible. Otherwise, issuance of the declaration may be delayed beyond the date of conclusion of the North Atlantic Pact.

The question of the proposed declaration has been discussed at the working level by NEA, EUR, UNA, and L, all of which Offices are in agreement. It has also been discussed by the Under Secretary's Staff Committee and by an ad hoc group composed of Mr. Rusk, Mr. George Allen, Mr. George Butler, Mr. Walton Butterworth, Mr. Llewellyn Thompson and representatives of NEA. These latter groups were also substantially in agreement on the question, but certain doubts were expressed regarding the exact form and content of the declaration. We are continuing work on this with the appropriate officers, but the fact that the text of the Atlantic Pact is to be published within the next week and that Mr. Bevin is proposing a preliminary statement, as indicated above, seems to make it necessary that you give the matter your personal consideration without awaiting the submission of a draft text of the declaration or statement. Among other things, it seems essential that you

include

includein your speech next week some statement regarding Greece, Turkey, and Iran, such a statement not to replace the proposed declaration but rather to serve as an interim measure.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That you approve the insertion in your speech of a statement along the lines of the attached draft (Tab B).

2. That you receive the British Ambassador at your earliest convenience to hear from him personally the views of Mr. Bevin on the subject.

3. That you inform the British Ambassador of your intention to include such a statement in your speech and suggest that Mr. Bevin find an occasion to make a similar statement at approximately the same time.

4. That you inform the British Ambassador of your agreement, subject to the approval of the President and to favorable Congressional reaction, that some form of additional declaration or statement regarding Greece, Turkey, and Iran should be made at the time of signature or ratification of the North Atlantic Pact.

5. That if the Ambassador raises other questions, such as the form or precise content of the declaration or the possible participation of France, you may wish to say simply that these matters are still under study and that you are not yet prepared to discuss them.

NEA:GTI:JDJernegan:hd
3-8-49

REASONS FOR INCLUDING IRAN

It is considered that the inclusion of Iran in the proposed declaration is essential because:

(1) The US and UK are believed to share the view that the security of the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East is vital to their own security and that the security of Italy, Greece, Turkey and Iran is vital to the security of the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East.

(2) Iran has been and remains under the most prolonged and direct Soviet threat of any of the four countries. This is true despite the fact that there is at present no guerrilla warfare in Iran as there is in Greece. The Soviet threat to Greece is indirect and does not carry with it the constant menace of overt armed aggression by the Soviet forces of the sort that has been repeatedly implied in the official Soviet communications to the Iranian government.

(3) By the nature of its geographic position and its internal weakness, Iran is the logical "soft spot" to tempt the Soviet Union to risk aggression if it should come to believe that such aggression would not produce a serious counter-reaction by the US and UK.

(4) Realizing their exposed position and their own weakness, and being psychologically hyper-sensitive, the Iranian government and people are even more likely than the Italians, Greeks or Turks to feel deserted if the conclusion of the Atlantic Pact is not accompanied by any reassuring statement in their regard. The belief that the major western powers had decided to write off Iran might well cause the Iranian government to seek some sort of accommodation with the USSR which could not fail to be disastrous to our interests. Iranian history abounds in instances of policy shifts of this sort, the most recent being the period in 1946 when Prime Minister Qavam, fearing that the United Nations could not protect his country from the Russians, attempted appeasement to the extent of recognizing the autonomy of Azerbaijan and admitting Tudeh party members to his cabinet.

(5) The issuance of a declaration regarding Italy, Greece and Turkey but omitting Iran would certainly appear to the world as a clear tacit admission that the security of Iran was of much less concern to the US and UK than that of the other countries. It would amount almost to a positive statement that the US and UK would acquiesce in armed attack on Iran. It would be better to have no declaration at all than one which omitted Iran.

While we study ways and means to meet the problems of the North Atlantic area, we are by no means forgetting that American interests in security and American obligations under the United Nations Charter are not confined to any one part of the world. The United States has repeatedly demonstrated its concern with the maintenance of international peace and security in all parts of the world. Among others, our policies of support for the sovereignty, integrity and independence of Greece, Turkey and Iran are notable examples. We shall continue to follow these policies.

TOP SECRET 7 March 1949

DRAFT DECLARATION

The Government of the United States,

Having today participated in the conclusion of a treaty for collective security among certain states in the North Atlantic area, in support of the Purposes and Principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

Declares:

(1) The United States, as a member of the United Nations, is concerned not alone with security in the North Atlantic area, but with the maintenance of international peace and security in all parts of the world;

(2) Armed attack outside the North Atlantic area — for example notably on such states as Greece, Turkey, and Iran — would be a matter of grave concern to the United States and call for prompt and effective measures to uphold the Purposes and Principles of the Charter;

(3) In such event, the United States would deem necessary the holding of immediate consultations with other Governments specially concerned, with a view to taking appropriate action until the Security Council has taken measures adequate to restore the security of the country attacked.

Before resorting actual employ. force, shld. exhaust polit. + econ. means, including recourse to UN; shld also be in consonance with charter +, for as possible, in cooper. like-minded members UN; Unreal, unless B pow. ME+EM maintained + two countries follow parallel policies area.

TOP SECRET